

**NEWS**  
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## **VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS MARK 30 YEARS OF WEATHER REPORTING**

BISMARCK, N.D. - Volunteer weather observers for the Atmospheric Resource Board Cooperative Observer Network (ARBCON) completed their 30<sup>th</sup> season of reporting growing-season rain and hail observations this year.

The 30-year record marks a milestone for ARBCON and its 778 active participants statewide, as this rather unique, high-density dataset now meets the standard for climate assessment set by the National Weather Service.

Since 1977 over 3,200 individuals have volunteered their time to make daily readings of rainfall and report hail events from April through September. Seventy active observers have been reporting for all 30 years, while another 188 have at least 20 years of service. To mark the anniversary, the ARB has started a service recognition program to acknowledge its observers.

“The database includes nearly 844,000 daily rainfall reports and over 10,700 hail reports”, said Darin Langerud, director of the Atmospheric Resource Board (ARB). Without our dedicated observers, the data wouldn’t exist. We owe them many thanks for their service.”

The reports have been used by many federal, state, and local government offices; private companies; universities for research applications; farmers and ranchers; and the general public.

“Information ARBCON observers have captured over the years have benefited the National Weather Service in verifying severe weather reports and forecasting flood potential in North Dakota,” stated Charlene Prindiville, Hydrologist with the National Weather Service in Bismarck.

Now that the 30-year threshold has been reached, statewide precipitation normals can be mapped for the growing season months. Many other products can also be produced that will better define the patterns of rain and hail in North Dakota.

Information from ARBCON is available on the Internet at <http://swc.nd.gov/arb>. Monthly and seasonal rainfall maps from 1977-2006 and daily rain and hail data can be found on the website.

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer observer can contact the ARB at (800) 654-5981, or e-mail at [dabrothers@nd.gov](mailto:dabrothers@nd.gov).

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